

PARASYTES

From all over Canada, punks congregate in Montreal, Canada in order to find like minded people and live as much off the grid as humanly possible. During a long, frigid cold winter, punks wait until it starts to thaw before they venture back into the civilized world. This group expedited their rise from hibernation by taking their brand of raw punk on tour to Colombia in April. They sat down with MRR to regale us with tales of high jinks and talk about their future plans.

Interview and introduction by Dave Quirk.

Luke: guitar | Janick: vocals | Sticker: drums | Tom: bass | Nick: guitar



MRR: So Parasytes, why'd you choose the name for the band?

Luke: Me and Janick made a list of band names and Parasytes was on both of our lists so it seemed right. The Y was added cause there's some skate punk band from Berkeley with the name Parasites.

MRR: What does everyone bring to the mixture that each of you thought would make a good bandmate?

Janick: I think we have different influences and backgrounds but common interests that makes this band what it is. Plus it's great to play with people you have never played with before..

Tom: Other than Luke and Nick, none of us have been in bands together before so it was kind of a good, new chemistry. It helps to shuffle the deck sometimes. It's nice having two guitar players that are used to playing with each other already, though, for sure.

MRR: Many of you are from different parts of Canada. What drew you to the city of Montreal?

Tom: Oh man, it's the city where young people go to retire. Beer is cheap and the punk shows are plentiful.

Sticker: The music scene is really good.

Luke: It's just been one of the cities that always produced a ton of bands. The community is tight here with places like the Loudhouse.

Tom: It's easy to get along here as a musician and a punk. There's

lots of places to play shows and under the table jobs you can get. I'm from Halifax, NS and it's not the same there.

Luke: I'm from Edmonton.

Sticker: I'm Moncton, NB.

Janick: Montreall.

Luke: McCracken's from Vancouver.

Tom: Coast to coast and end up in the middle.

MRR: What's it like right now in the Montreal punk scene? Who's making a splash that you think outsiders should pay attention to?

Luke: Niños Rata is really good. Playing Spanish hardcore.

Janick: Torment is pretty good with Matt from Thee Nodes. It's punk rock with a bit of Oil influence. Also, Croche, an all-girl band, Drip, Anusol, Mueco, Action Sedition, Gasm, Dethfox, Cloaca, Faze, Shotcallers, FITS...Also Dekoder but they've been active for a while now.

Sticker: Sex Face for sure but they have been around for a while.

Tom: Not douche Oil but good Oil

Janick: Even with hibernating in the winter, there's still a lot of shit happening and we still go to a lot of shows. Still a lot of venues and bands from around the world come here.



MRR: Some of you organize Varning Festival. What are some of the pluses and minues of being so closely associated with that event?

Janick: It's a big privilege to host all these bands and meet all these awesome people from everywhere around the world every year. To get to discover these great bands and to play with them is a great honor. There's a downside to everything but it's mostly the responsibilities and stress throughout the whole fest to make sure that everyone gets paid and it runs smoothly.

Tom: Yeah, trying to manage that fest is a lot of work for Janick in the months leading up to it while trying to also book Parasytes stuff.

Janick: I try but it's kinda crazy. It's a bit stressful but I get a lot of help also from my partners Claudie, Emma, the staff at Katacombes, and a lot of my friends that host bands and make food. A lot of teamwork is involved and we usually feel it for a week after but it's definitely worth it, haha! This year was the 10th anniversary of the festival as well as our venue The Katacombes and was super excited about the line up! Great bands played from all around: Slowmotions (Japan), Secret Prostitutes, Crazy Spirit, Green Beret, PMS 84, Narcoleptics, Pollen, Concealed Blade, and way more.

MRR: You recently returned from a tour of Colombia. How did that come about?

Janick: Well, I invited Secta and Dead Hero to the last Varning so we met them and bonded very quickly. Such great people! They invited us to tour Colombia (Carlos, punk boss!) and that's how it started!

Tom: It directly came from the Colombia bands being here in Montreal the year before and us establishing a rapport with them. So they booked our tour down there and couldn't have treated us any better. They were friggin' amazing! Rat Trap Collective and Carlos really treated us good. He was our punk boss / tour manager.

Janick: And the bands we played with—Final, Traicion and NN—were passionate people and Ximena and Juan David hosted us at their house for like a week or something. Very inspiring and touching actually to see.

Luke: The plus about Varning is we got to meet those guys and ended up planning a split with Secta!

Janick: South America was beautiful and amazing! Our first show was in Bogotá in a place called Metal Garage run by a collective. It's actually a co-op and they have jam spaces, a recording studio, a show space, and a super nice backyard. They are well organized and are also established in Florida and want to start a collaboration with Montreal. Pretty inspiring! They even have their own beers!

MRR: What are some of the challenges you've faced since becoming a band?

Luke: Certain border issues that we had to deal with that fucked a lot of shit up, especially the west coast US tour that we had to cancel, a stab at our morale. Basically, if you're in

a band and trying to tour in the US you always face the chance that you won't get in through the border unless you have the proper visa. The visas are the same for smaller bands that make just enough to get from show to show and bigger bands that can make a living. The border doesn't see a difference and we ended up all getting flagged because they found out that we were a band. They went as far as to search through phones, emails, etc. A few of us were held in LAX for seven hours. Now when we want to tour in the US we will have to get proper visas. It seems that it's becoming harder for international touring bands to get into the USA to play.

Janick: But at the same time, I've been touring the USA without a visa for almost 20 years—it's a pretty good fuckin' run! But yeah it does suck but we gotta move on. We'll play elsewhere for the time being and next time we wanna go to USA, we'll have to get a proper visa.



MRR: But there are other tours to look forward to in the meantime.

Tom: We went to Japan in August, with extreme bands and extreme shows. Every little punk's dream.

Janick: Nori from Life that played Varning Festival a few years ago organized it and booked a bunch of Japanese bands that played throughout the ten years of the festival. It was amazing! Arigato, Nori, you rule! Also Toyo from Zyanose, Jacky from Framtid and Heat from D.S.B. helped out.

MRR: Janick, I know you've put in a lot of work bringing over Japanese bands to come play Varning so it's good it's coming back around for you. You've worked with Distort Reality and Runstate Tapes. How have the releases been?

Janick: Well, it started as an inside joke between me and Skell [from Distort Reality] because he's released something from every band I've been in, like After The Bombs and Truncheons, so we thought we should keep the tradition going.

Tom: And Runstate is our friend JP from Inpsy who's the "go to" guy for punk tapes in Montreal. He bangs them out whenever you ask for them and easy to deal with.

Luke: I think Runstate is just a good way to show what's going on in Montreal and surrounding cities.

MRR: Yeah sure, it's a cheap way to get your sound out there or at least what they can expect from a band.

Janick: Like back in the '80s, man!

MRR: After the demo and EP, what's next for Parasytes, release wise?

Luke: Split with Secta from Colombia that just came out!

Janick: It's an international release with five labels involved: Discos MMM from California (Josh from Ruleta Rusa), Dure Realité (a new Montreal label from the collective that organizes Revolution Fest), FYBS Records in Sacramento, Distro Rakkos (Nori from Life) in Japan, and Rat Trap from Bogotá, Colombia!

MRR: Whoa! That's quite a list. You've pretty much covered the entire globe.

Luke: Pretty much everyone is gonna get stuck with a shitload of records, haha.

MRR: What's everyone's favorite band moments so far? Don't hold back on any road stories!

Luke: Every time we play NYC is funny. The first time we played there, it had an open bar and all of us blacked out.

Janick: It was at Home Sweet Home on a Monday and I barely remember playing that show.

Tom: He was like "Open bar but don't go crazy" but by the end of the night he was just pretending he couldn't hear us yelling for more beer.

Luke: I remember Sticker walking out of the place and falling down the stairs and then when going back in he fell up the stairs. Beautiful scene.

Tom: One of my favourite times was in Richmond, VA at Shraven's house; when we were trying to get this fire started but there wasn't enough oxygen to get it going. There was so much gasoline that it wouldn't light unless your arm was right in the fire. Janick was huffing the gas jokingly and telling us to put on more gasoline. So we did and then she said to light it on fire! All of a sudden, there was this huge pillar of fire and Janick was propelled backwards on her ass and almost burnt her face!! And all of Shraven's chickens were scared too.

Janick: I was really lucky I didn't burn my face, hehehe.

MRR: OK, let's wrap this up—any last comments or complaints?

Tom: Yeah, why doesn't MRR ever publish my poems I keep sending in?!

MRR: Perfect ending.

parasytes.bandcamp.com